

**SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION REFLECTED IN ANNE BRONTE'S
AGNES GREY (1847): MARXIST THEORY**



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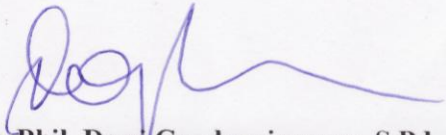
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PUBLICATION ARTICLE

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AGNES GREY (1847): MARXIST THEORY

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AGNES GREY (1847): MARXIST THEORY

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkapkan kelas sosial yang terjadi pada novel Agnes Grey (1847) karya Anne Bronte. Novel Agnes Grey (1847) dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan Marxist. Analisis diselesaikan dengan mengacu pada dua objek: pertama yaitu analisa yang berdasar elemen struktural, dan yang kedua yaitu analisa mengenai sosial klasifikasi dengan menggunakan pendekatan Marxist. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan dua sumber data. Yang pertama yaitu novel Agnes Grey (1847) karya Anne Bronte sebagai sumber utama. Sumber data kedua diambil dari buku, biografi penulis, jurnal, sumber internet yang berhubungan dengan penelitian. Dua jenis data diperoleh melalui perpustakaan yang dianalisa menggunakan analisa deskriptif. Berdasarkan penelitian tersebut, peneliti menyimpulkan beberapa kesimpulan. Pertama yaitu elemen struktural novel yang diperoleh melalui karakter dan karakterisasi, seting tempat dan waktu, plot, sudut pandang, dan tema yang terangkum menjadi satu sebagai cerita dalam novel. Kedua, yang berdasar pada pendekatan Marxist dalam materialisme dialektis, sejarah materialisme, perjuangan kelas, keterasingan, revolusi dan klasifikasi sosial yang tercermin pada karakter utama dalam novel Agnes Grey (1847)

Kata kunci: sosial klasifikasi, elemen struktural novel, pendekatan Marxist

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to reveal the social classification in Agnes Grey (1847) novel by Anne Bronte. Agnes Grey (1847) novel is analyzed by using Marxist approach. The analysis is done by determining two objects: the first is analyzing the novel based on the structural elements, and the second is analyzing the problem of social classification by using Marxist approach. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. There are two types of data sources. The source of primary data is Anne Bronte's Agnes Grey (1847) novel. The secondary data sources are from books, biography of the author, journals, and internet sources related to the study. The two kinds of data collected through library research and analyzed with descriptive analysis. Based on the research, the researcher draws the following conclusions. The

first, the structural element of the novel described the character and characterization, setting of place and time, plot, point of view, and theme. It shapes into one unity in a novel story. The second, based on Marxist approach in dialectical, historical, class struggle, alienation, revolution and the social discrimination was revealed with other descriptions of Marxist the major character reflected in Agnes Grey (1847) novel.

Keywords: social classification, structural elements of novel, Marxist approach.

1. Introduction

Agnes Grey is an interesting fantasy novel. These novels are interesting to be read and also to be a research object. As far as the researcher concerns, the research on Agnes Grey has been conducted by the students around the world.

Agnes Grey is young woman who takes on a job as a governess in order to help her family. Believing that she will be a capable teacher, Agnes embraces the idea of her job, but soon learns the task is not as easy as she once thought. Difficult students and pampering parents combine to make her job almost impossible. Agnes perseveres, though, and soon finds the life that she has prayed to have.

The issues of social discrimination the major character in Agnes Grey novel is reflected well. According to Grant (2001) social classification is a set of concepts in the social sciences and political theory centered on models of social stratification in which people are grouped into a set of hierarchical social categories, the most common being the upper, middle, and lower classes. Class is an essential object of analysis for sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, and social historians. However, there is no consensus on the best definition of the term "class" and the term has different contextual meanings. In common parlance, the term "social class" is usually synonymous with "socio-economic class," defined as "people having the same social, economic, or educational status, "the working class", an emerging professional class. However, academics distinguish social class and socio economic status, with the former referring to one's relatively stable socio cultural background

and the latter referring to one's current social and economic situation and, consequently, being more changeable over time.

The struggle depicted by the character of Agnes Grey in this story is not only performed in her survival against her employers oppression within her being of governess but also the struggle she has to convince her father, mother, and sister that she is able to be a governess. Her decision to be a governess is at the first time denied by her family. They see Agnes, as the youngest child, must be incapable of that great responsibility to teach and take care of children.

1.1 Literary Review

Agnes Grey is relatively classic work and many studies have been conducted. One of researches is created by Qoriatul Mahfudhoh Qoffal from The State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang under the title The Uniqueness of main character as described in Agnes Grey by Anne Bronte. That previous research focused on two significant problems. She tried to find out the kinds of woman uniqueness and also the kinds of process development owned by Agnes Grey in Agnes Grey by Anne Bronte. In her analysis, she used theory of woman psychology, especially the theory which studies about woman unique character.

1.2 Problem Statement

The major problem of the study is “How Anne Bronte synthesized social class determination into a new society and how structural element of the novel is?”

1.3 Limitation of the Study

In this study, the researcher focuses in analyzing Social Classification which is reflected in the *Agnes Grey* using marxist approach.

1.4 Underlying Theory

This chapter deals with underlying theory. The theory that is going to be used in this research, namely Marxist theory, which is appropriate to analyze the problem in this novel *Agnes Grey*.

1.4.1 Notion of Marxist

Marxist theory explains that social theory about human live in the world. Marxist theorists tend to focus their interpretations on considering how literary texts depict class oppression, strife, and social inequality to serve critique elements of capitalistic Western life. Marxist theorists also consider how literary texts subvert even overturn ordinary forms of social and political order then it will present new forms of social and political perception and interaction. According to Suseno (2001:5) on Sati Nurchotimah thesis, marxism is the term for ideology about the relation between economic, social, and political concept. Marxism is one of the components in the communist sytem ideology and marxism is different with communism.

1.5 Major Principle of Marxist Theory

1.5.1 Dialectical Materialism

According to Elster (2000:47) in Sati Nurchotimah is thesis, dialectical is a term from ancient Greek. It is a concept that sees conflict, antagonism, and contradiction is condition that needed to reach some certain result. While materialism means belief that only money, possessions, and something can be seen are important. So dialectical materialism is the process that build reality through the process of contradiction to reach the absolute truth and movement.

1.5.2 Historical Materialism

According to Engels on Prihana India thesis, the universal or general is not some mystical, immanent reality existing in a different sphere from the concrete particulars.

The suprastructure economy is reflected in suprastructure of social politic and ideology. But the reality that determined the structure

of society and the development in history is the structure of social classes (Suseno, 1999:1350).

Slaughter (1980:197) explains about identical that a process and phenomena. Identical is the individual exists only in the connection to universal. The universal exists only in the individual and individual. Every individual is universal.

According to Karl Marx view, historical materialism is a term that contains about society and history. Historical materialism is marxist theory that tends to focus on the social development based on economic circumstance. The structure of society and the development in history are determined by the structure of social classes.

1.5.3 Class Struggle

According to Sati Nurchotimah on her thesis, Class struggle focuses on the struggle of the oppressed class against the oppressor. It focuses on the way the class oppressed face the oppressor. The reason behind this class of struggle is economic. Because economic can determine the society class of level such as the elite (the aristocrats and the bourgeois) and the proletariat. The oppression that makes the proletariat struggle is they work for the elite but it makes them exploited. Rummel (1977) said "Marx's emphasis on class conflict as constituting the dynamics of social change, his awareness that change was not random but outcome of a conflict of interest, and his view of social relation as based on power were contributions of the first magnitude". Class of struggle is the active expression of the theoretical class of conflict that is looked from any socialist perspective.

1.5.4 Alienation

According to Suseno (2001:88) on Sati Nurchotimah thesis, Karl Marx views human is alienated from his society because of his work in capitalist economy. The basic human alienation is work. Because the fundamental human activity is work and work makes human being real.

Human nature is aspect of alienation. Human work to appropriate their needs. Human is different from animal because human need to produce foods or goods by work. Basically alienation is happen both in human and world which it is separated from object (Fargacs, 1986:63).

1.5.5 Revolution

The result of class struggle is revolution. Revolution is an indication to the society which survived from crisis (Permanasari, 2011:18). Social revolution is the rapid and fundamental changes of society and class structure of a country. In the other word according to (Theda Skocpol:2), Social revolution coupled with the rebellion of the lower classes or the oppressed class. the lower classes or proletariat change the social structure from old into the new one. By the revolution that is made by the lower classes, the lower classes sweep the class stratification to stop discrimination, exploration, then make a new society for a better life.

1.6 Notion of Social Classification

This research takes issue about Social Classification that occur in Agnes Grey novel. The Marxist theory of classes thus constitutes a theory of class power within class struggle. According to Bendix & Lipset (1968: 620) the classes are, therefore, defined exclusively on the field of class struggle. They do not pre-exist class struggle, and consequently "they cannot be defined separately one from the other, but only through the social relations of an antagonism, which brings the one class in confrontation with the other". This means that the classes shall be perceived mainly as social relations and practices and not as "groups of individuals".

Parallel to the construction of the theory of class power, within the context of class struggle, Marx perceives that specific societies consist of a mosaic of social - class relations and of specific historical manifestations of these social relations, which do not all belong to the same type of social coherence (the same type of class power). They constitute, rather, the specific historical result of the evolution of society, which, as a rule allows

the "survival" of elements with roots to previous types of social organization, to previous historical systems of class power.

Marx seeks and isolates, in this way, those elements of social relations which: 1) Comprise the unique character of capitalism, of each capitalist society, of capitalist class domination generally and discerns this from the corresponding elements of other types of class domination (and of the corresponding social organization). 2) Constitute the permanent, "unaltered" nucleus of the capitalist system of class domination, independently from the particular evolution of each specifically studied capitalist society.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher for this study applies descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative method is a research which employs the method of collecting, describing, classifying and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusion. The object of the study of the research is *Agnes Grey* (1847) novel, written by Anne Bronte.

3. RESEARCH FINDING

3.1 Analysis of Social Classification in Agnes Grey (1847) based on Marxist Approach

3.1.1 Dialectical Materialism

Agnes Grey novel reflects the dialectical materialism. The Social Classification as the issues of this novel shows the first idea or thesis that comes from pressure of Mrs. Bloomfield.

Yet, if Mrs. Bloomfield were a kind, motherly woman, I might do very well, after all; and the children, of course, I should soon be at ease with them--and Mr. Bloomfield, I hoped, I should have but little to do with. (Agnes Grey 1847:8)

"I talked to my pupils as well as I could, and tried to render myself agreeable; but with little success I fear, for their mother's presence kept me under unpleasant restraint." (Agnes Grey 1847:9)

“Though I wish her to be kept out of the nursery as much as possible, as she is now almost six years old. And might acquire bad habits from the nurses. I have ordered her crib to be placed in your room, and if you will be so kind as to overlook her washing and dressing, and take charge of her clothes, she need have nothing further to do with the nursery maid.” (Agnes Grey 1847:8)

Then, in Murray family will become a second Agnes employer. They show off arrogant and their high social class with Agnes. “I did not see her till eleven o'clock on the morning after my arrival; when she honoured me with a visit, just as my mother might step into the kitchen to see a new servant-girl: yet not so, either, for my mother would have seen her immediately after her arrival, and not waited till the next day” (Agnes Grey 1847:30)

3.2 Historical Materialism

In this novel as the high social classes is Bloomfield family and Murray family. Then the low social class is Agnes Grey, Grey Family, Nancy Brown and Mr. Weston. The quotes below show the character of Bloomfield's family:

“Nothing more was said; and I was very glad to get out of the room with my pupils; for I never felt so ashamed and uncomfortable in my life for anything that was not my own fault”. (Agnes Grey 1847:13)

Agnes struggle will be doubly paid. The second employer who hires Agnes is Murray family. According to Agnes, Mr. Murray's status is higher than Mr. Bloomfield.

“I now flattered myself I was going to see something in the world: Mr. Murray's residence was near a large town, and not in a manufacturing district, where the people had nothing to do but to make money; his rank

from what I could gather, appeared to be higher than that of Mr. Bloomfield” (Agnes Grey 1847:27)

3.3 Class Struggle

In Agnes Grey, the class struggle can be seen in the process when Agnes always blamed Mrs. Bloomfield for the actions of her naughty child

“Mary Ann is a naughty girl, ma’am.”

“but what are these shocking scream?”

“she is screaming in a passion.”

“ I never heard such a dreadful noise. You might be killing her.

Why is she not out with her brother?”

“I cannot get her to finish her lessons.”

“But Mary Ann must be a good girl, and finish her lessons.”

This was blandly spoken to the child. “And I hope I shall never hear such terrible cries again!” (Agnes Grey 1847:15).

The naughtiness of children is not one thing that Agnes should handle with. She has to cope with the parents too. Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield frequently leave the fault of their children on Agnes side. One example is when Tom, Mary and Fanny escape from the schoolroom and run out of the house into the garden, where they plunge about in snow, shouting and screaming in exultant glee. Agnes has attempted to catch them and get them in but she fails. Suddenly Agnes hears a voice behind her, in harshly piercing tones, exclaiming. Agnes is also oppressed by the parents. Mr. Bloomfield is angry to Agnes whom he considers irresponsible of his children. Agnes does not let her employer to wrong her that way because she has tried to control them. Mr. Bloomfield still forces her to get his children in. Agnes refused to do it. She thinks what she has done is enough. She is even asking bravely to Mr. Bloomfield to do it himself. It is her struggle for showing her power.

‘But I INSIST upon their being got in!’ cried he, approaching nearer, and looking perfectly ferocious.

‘Then, sir, you must call them yourself, if you please, for they won’t listen to me,’ I replied, stepping back.

‘Come in with you, you filthy brats; or I’ll horsewhip you every one!’ roared he; and the children instantly obeyed. ‘There, you see!—they come at the first word!’

‘Yes, when YOU speak.’ (Agnes Grey 1847:18)

3.4 Alienation

. In this novel, Agnes Grey is alienated by her family. Rosalie, the oldest daughter Murray family isolated Agnes in Horton Lodge, forbids Agnes to go home for the holiday because she wants Agnes to present at the ball and see her best appearance there.

‘Well, I only said it to tease you. But now I want to talk about the ball; and to tell you that you positively must put off your holidays till it is over.’

‘Why so?--I shall not be present at the ball.’

‘No, but you will see the rooms decked out before it begins, and hear the music, and, above all, see me in my splendid new dress. I shall be so charming, you’ll be ready to worship me--you really must stay.’

‘I should like to see you very much; but I shall have many opportunities of seeing you equally charming, on the occasion of some of the numberless balls and parties that are to be, and I cannot disappoint my friends by postponing my return so long.’
(Agnes Grey 1847:35)

3.5 Analysis of Structural Elements of the Novel

3.5.1 Character and Characterization (Major Character)

Agnes Grey

Agnes Grey is woman of the main character in this story that appears from the beginning to the end to narrate all the experiences

she has. She is a youngest daughter of a clergyman of the north England and this circumstance puts her into middle class status. Her family is just decent which is one day becoming more unfortunate by the fact that her father loses a lot of amount of money in the case of failure of his business and creates the worse condition of finance. Being aware of this situation, Agnes wants to give help by deciding to be a governess as the way which is considered that such job cannot degrade her middle class status because the patriarchal custom in that era limited women from the workplace but governess is viewed as an extraordinary profession.

3.6 Setting

There are many set of place which is described in Agnes Grey (1847) novel. The places namely: West Yorkshire, The fictitious village, Mansion of Wellwood, A Well, Horton Lodge, Church.

3.7 Plot

3.7.1 Plot Structure

Exposition

The exposition of Agnes Grey started from description of her character in chapter one. Agnes was interested in being a governess who provided financial help to the family until chapter two. The story began with a girl; Agnes Grey was seventeenth years old. She lived in West Yorkshire with her parents. Mr. Grey tried to increase the family's financial standing, but the merchant he entrusted his money to die in a wreck, and the lost investment plunged the family into debt. Agnes, her sister Mary, and their mother tried to keep expenses low and bring extra money, but Agnes was frustrated that everyone treated her like a child. To prove herself and to earn money, she was determined to get a position as a governess.

3.7.2 Complication

Internal conflict

The first internal conflict is Agnes's step to leave her family at the tender age of eighteen in order to become a governess, to attain the social and economic independence may be considered as a bold step as it was quite uncommon for the Victorian era woman. She resisted being kept the child and the pet of the family too helpless and dependent unfit for buffeting with the cares and turmoil of life. She wanted to go out into the world; to enter upon a new life; to act for her; to exercise her unused faculties; to try her unknown powers; to earn her own maintenance. Agnes's capabilities were always underestimated by her family. She craved for autonomy and independence to take responsibility of her life; she wanted to come out of the shadow of elderly members of her family who were always there to take decisions for her and thus, made her feel dependent and incapable.

3.7.3 External Conflict

The external conflict that faced by Agnes when she survival against her employers oppression within her being of governess and the struggle she has to convince her father, mother, and sister that she is able to be a governess.

3.8 Climax

The climax occurred when Rosalie wanted Agnes to postpone her holiday just depending on her own excitement. She hoped Agnes to present at the ball so she could adore her beauty but the harder Rosalie forced her to stay, the firmer Agnes decided to go home. The writer sees here that Agnes struggled for her right. The oppression in this second family was also in form of marginalization. The social class was the aspect of people's life had been separated from the private or personal of

one's self. Those who lived were now restricted to the laborers or workers class were disrespected and considered marginal to the public life of the society. The marginalization towards Agnes could be seen through the part when Agnes admitted that she was lonely because she was restricted inside the household of her employer without a chance to communicate liberally with the people around.

3.9 Resolution

The resolution of Agnes Grey novel was finally the experience of becoming a governess thoroughly came to an end. The ending of Agnes' experience in being a governess in Murray family was not caused by the dissatisfaction of her employer like in the Bloomfield. Different from her experience in Bloomfield family which was ended by her firing, in Murray family her service of being a governess was ended by her own decision when she heard that her father was dead. After that, she did not choose to be a governess anymore.

3.10 Point of view

In Agnes Grey (1847) novel, Bronte used third person point of view. She used personal pronouns e.g. He, she, and they. She also used names in characters e.g. Agnes, Weston, Mary, Rosalie, Nancy Brown, and the others.

3.11 Style

The style of Agnes Grey (1847) novel points out that there are many things involved for example, diction, grammatical structure, sentence construction, Diction, figurative language.

3.12 Theme

The theme that present in Agnes Grey (1847) novel was described clearly. The theme is about pain, patience, Social instruction, Empathy, Social Classification, Isolation, and Agnes' story. This novel based on Anne's recollections of her experience with the children of the

Ingham family and the Robinson family. In the story Agnes Grey was employed by the Murray family. Agnes' step to leave her family at the tender age of eighteen in order to become a governess, to attain the social and economic independence may be considered as a bold step as it was quite uncommon for the Victorian era woman.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The result of the analysis shows that the whole elements of *The Agnes Grey* (1847) novel to present a marginalization. As the main character, Agnes Grey has an important role throughout the novel story. She appears in the exposition, complication, climax, and resolution of the novel. As human being he tends to have a problem in her life, It motivates him to solve the problem. The *Agnes Grey* (1847) novel by Anne Bronte was very interesting to read and study, the author showed the condition of Governess during Victoria era. There are so many moral message expressed by the author clearly. The researcher uses Marxist approach to analyze the novel because the story in the novel contains major principles of Marxism.

The researcher realizes that this study was not perfect because of her limited knowledge in literature. The researcher hopes that the reader can take the lesson from the novel and uses this study to compare this research with another in order to widen the readers knowledge to the development of literary study. After reading *Agnes Grey* (1847) novel, the researcher finds many moral values from the novel. The novel tells about the struggle depicted by Agnes Grey in this story is not only performed in her survival against her employers oppression within her being of governess but also the struggle she has to convince her father, mother, and sister that she is able to be a governess. Her decision to be a governess is at the first time denied by her family. They see Agnes, as the youngest child, must be incapable of that great responsibility to teach and take care of children. However, she tries to convince them over and over again until they let her to do so at last. The researcher can give the contribution and information about literature study, especially the analysis by using Marxist approach. For all students, this case

was important to be an advisor. They have to do anything to reach their goal. Nothing was impossible if they try to get it.

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